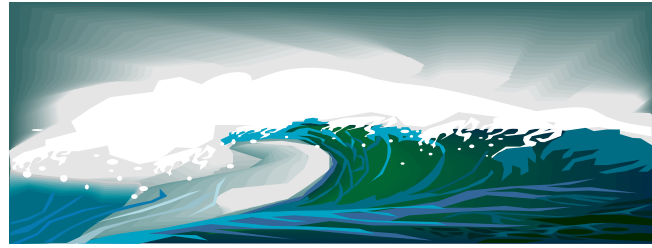




The *November 2017*
Anchor

We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul...Heb.6:19a



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November is the month we set aside and celebrate Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is a time when families make the extra effort to come together and connect with each other, remembering common events that serve to bind loved ones together. It is a time to reflect on our blessings and thank God for them.

I think it is much easier to celebrate Thanksgiving when all is well. My heart goes out to the many people who have been displaced and uprooted by flooding, fire, and recent earthquakes. In life we never know when our world can be turned upside down, but our response is truly influenced by our faith in the promises of Jesus Christ.

There are several scriptures that speak to faith in times of adversity. Some I would like to reference include: *1 Peter 1:6-9*, "***In this greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory, and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and though you do not see him now, you believe in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your soul.***"

Peter is writing to Christians who are being persecuted by Rome because of their faith. Christians continue to be persecuted in many places in our world today. Christians also suffer from the same types of illnesses and calamities that affect people regardless of their religion, ethnicity, etc. *In times such as these, we are also called upon to rejoice and be glad.* It is in these moments that we can truly grow and it is in these times we might ask the harder question of why did this have to happen?

In thinking of the wildfires and calamities that have recently been suffered, we have an opportunity to see the best as well as the worst in human behavior. In the best we see people coming together for the common goal of helping each other. Many times the organization that is leading this effort is Christian-based. Christians are a people who are about helping each other. One emotion that is commonly felt is a sense of gratitude towards fellow man and also towards Christ when it becomes obvious that people are allowing their mind, hands, and feet, to be used by God.

Becoming Christ-like in our behavior, in our words, and very person, is about being open to His influence as well as His desires. Living in this constant state, we are more able and ready to respond to the plight of other people. We are less into self and more into helping others. Christians become more God centered and less self-centered.

In times of crises there are many opportunities to win people to Christ. *Matthew 25:35a* "***For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,***" There are many people that are going to be displaced for a while due to the fires, floods, and earthquakes. In *Leviticus 19:33-34* we read, "***When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as a native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.***" I suspect there will be many churches as well as church families that will be opening their doors and homes to help ease the plight of those who are suffering.

Thanksgiving Blessings now and always, *Pastor Mark*



Can you believe we are only a couple of months away from Christmas? As we head into the season of Thanksgiving, we begin to reflect on the many blessings in life we have. It would be incredible if we could all just take a few minutes to count our blessings; the world would be a much better place.

Last month Captivate attended the Judgment House in Parkersburg. During the walk-through drama, teens got to follow a family impacted by drugs. The young girl was addicted to heroin, while her brother was a police officer. The storyline involved the officer coming upon a drug party, where his sister was present, only to be shot in the line of duty and died. The young woman later overdoses and dies. The man and woman went into eternity on different ends of the spectrum, one goes to heaven and the other goes to hell. Teens got to see a demonstration of what both could be like.

What struck me most, was the woman standing in judgment and shown a video of what her life could have been, had she chosen to follow Jesus instead of drugs. The moment in and of itself, was touching to me. I realized that there are many people today, going into eternity knowing they passed many opportunities to give their heart to the Lord. The whole store line, made me want to reach out even further to those in our community who are struggling with addiction. On the way home from the event, Pastor Mark and I had the chance to engage the young people about the drama, and what they took from it.

Unfortunately, our Halloween party had to be canceled due to the weather. However, I want to thank Abbi and Kevin Woods for allowing us to host our party at their Tudors location. We had the whole store to ourselves and had a great meal. Thanks to the dozen or so that attended. Annø Middle School group also attended Tudors that night. *First Baptist had the entire restaurant.* It helps to know the owners who are Christians!

I want to say thank you to everyone that helped with the End Zone this year. ***Over 600 kids took part in the events this year.*** We are so blessed! It truly is a church effort. We look forward to next year's season. But until then, let's get some rest.

I want to end by reminding everyone that on Saturday, November 11 at Parchment Valley Conference Center there will be the *Walk Thru the Bible* seminar. **I cannot emphasize enough about how I hope you can attend.** This is an event for everyone age 11 to 111. Come and join in fellowship with the Good Hope Association and many of the churches we have come to love as part of the revolving revival. There will be the young and old in attendance. FBC has 20 tickets free as part of our sponsorship. However, everyone is welcome. *Any young person wanting to attend or youth volunteer that has not signed up can go at no cost with the youth group.* Please let Toby know. ***We want this event to encourage you to read your Bible more and fall in love with the Word, so you can help ignite the passion of our young people to serve the Lord.***

Love and prayers,
Pastor Toby